

Edinburgh Scotland - Surge



MEMORIAL

CONCERNING

The Surgeons Hospital.





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[February 18. 1737.]

MEMORIAL concerning the SURGEONS HOSPITAL.



WE the SURGEON-APOTHECARIES in *Edinburgh*, Erectors of the *Surgeons Hospital* there, having lately set up and brought to some Bearing this new Hospital, do think it our Duty to publish this short Account of our Proceedings, before we call in the Money subscribed for:

WE have with Pleasure observed the good Effects of that pious and laudable Erection of the *Royal Infirmary*: But have it to regret, that though the Funds of their Hospital be considerably increased, and managed with great Care and Frugality by

the Directors ; yet we were often called to vast Numbers of poor, miserable, sick People ; who could not be received into the Infirmary, because their Stock is no ways answerable to the Number of the diseased Poor.

How often did we see poor Servants or Workmen, cast out of Business by Indisposition, confined to a Bed of Straw, unable to help themselves or hire others, destitute of Meat, Drink, Fire, and all other Things necessary for their Condition ! Which made it impossible for us, though never so willing, to give that Relief by Medicine which their Cases required.

MISERABLE Objects of this kind were so numerous, that in Town and Suburbs they amounted to some Hundreds, (of which nine or ten only could be taken in to the Infirmary at a Time.) What then must be the Number in *Scotland* ! Here Pity and Compassion, Charity and brotherly Love, Love to our Country, and even common Humanity set us a thinking how to provide some Relief in such calamitous Cases.

It was for this Purpose that we frequently convened, and conferred together : But finding

finding it impossible for us to attend; and provide any considerable Number with suitable Accommodation, as they lay scattered in so many different and distant Places; we concluded, that the Erection of a new Hospital was the only proper Mean by which such Numbers could be duly taken care of by us.

THEREFORE we resolved and determined to afford them all the Aid and Assistance which our Surgery and Circumstances would admit of, by laying the Foundation of a new Hospital, for curing and taking care of such, whose Cases in a peculiar and proper Sense require a Surgeon.

For this Purpose, we concerted to enter into a Bond of Erection, obliging each of us to contribute Money and Medicines sufficient to set this good Work a-going, and to give our Attendance *gratis* during our Life.

OUR next Step was, to lay our whole Scheme before our Brethren at a Meeting of the Corporation, for their farther Advice or Approbation, as well as to invite as many of them as inclined to join us.

At which Time our Design was approved of, and they agreed to call our House by the Name of *The Surgeons Hospital*.

As soon as we had projected the Erection of an Hospital, it immediately occurred to us, that the erecting a new, or enlarging the old one, might equally serve the same Ends : Therefore it was expressly stipulated amongst us, That as soon as we should enter into a Bond of Erection, we should confer with, and make Proposals to the Managers of the Infirmary, concerning an Union of the two Hospitals.

ACCORDINGLY Proposals of this kind were made to them in Writing, Conferences held for that Purpose, a Memorial given in to us by the said Managers, and a Reply to that Memorial was delivered to them by Mr. *Kennedy*, our Preses, and at that Time Deacon of the Surgeons, upon the first Monday of July 1736 ; to which we have got no Answer these eight Months.

THIS we thought fit to mention, to shew the World our Willingness to unite the two Hospitals.

ABOUT

ABOvE this Time it was often objected to us, That when the whole Corporation was invited and desired to serve the Royal Infirmary, when newly erected, we refused to concur and give our Assistance.

HERE we must deny the Fact: And we cannot but wonder how so many People fall into this Mistake, so directly contrary to a publick Deed of the Corporation of Surgeons; who at that Time obliged themselves, by an Act of their Society, to serve, and furnish Medicines to the Infirmary *gratis*, with as great Security for the Performance thereof as ever was given by them as a Society: Which Act is recorded in the Books of the Calling, dated the 10th February 1729.

WHEN Things were brought this Length, we began to contrive, how to make our Scheme more extensive, than what could be expected immediately from such small Funds: Therefore it was made an Article in our Constitution, not only, to take care of as many as our Hospital and Funds could accommodate; but likewise, to give our Advice, with all proper Medicaments and Dressings, to any who should be able to come to, or lodge near the Hospital.

AND, in the next Place, we appointed, That our Students and Apprentices should pay something into the Hospital-fund yearly: Which they have hitherto done most chearfully; and we hope, that, by their Help, and other charitable Donations, we shall be able to make this Hospital a School of Practical Surgery; not only, advantageous and instructive to them and their Successors in our Shops, but profitable to our Country, and in particular to this Metropolis: For it is certain, that as the Surgeons of this Country have been much employed, and had considerable Fame throughout the World, so this Improvement of their Education will add to that Fame, and make *Edinburgh* an excellent Nursery for Physicians and Surgeons; and, by being such, how many thousand Pounds will be saved to our Country in a few Years, which now are spent in *Leyden* and *Paris*?

ADD to this, what Sums of Money we may expect will be returned to *Scotland*, by our own Surgeons yearly returning home from all Corners of the World: Some have calculated *L. 100,000 Sterling* remitted to *Scotland* this Way within these twenty Years past; and, if we judge of what may be, by what has been, it will be no inconsiderable

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derable Branch of Trade to our indigent
Country.

ANOTHER Advantage which we beg
Leave to say will arise from this School of
Surgery is, That our Country will hereafter
be better served by Surgeons at home, when
all of them may have the Advantages of
Hospitals at *Edinburgh*, where their Educa-
tion may be compleated, at an Expence all
of them can afford; which never was the
Case before.

FROM what we have observed concerning
the Advantages of this School of Surgery
it is evident, That if this Piece of Educati-
on be confined to a few Surgeons and their
Apprentices, secluding all the rest, (what-
ever private Benefit might arise to these
few Surgeons, by such a Monoply) it
would not only be prejudicial to all those
who were secluded, but manifestly so to the
Nation in general.

IF this Piece of Education be confined to
a few, the Benefit arising from it to our
Country must be limited proportionally:
Suppose, for Example, one Fourth of our
Apprentices and Students get their Educati-
on compleated by Hospitals, and that the
remain-

remaining three Fourths must want it; then, of Consequence, a few of those who go to serve abroad may perhaps bring Money and Credit to our Nation, while the greatest Part of them go unfinished, to cast the Balance the other Way.

As for those who stay at home to serve in their own Country, a few of them likewise may be sufficiently qualified for their Business, and fit to be trusted with the Lives and Health of the Lieges, while three Fourths of them, for Want of a complete Education, do more than over-balance the Good done by the few skilful.

This is pretty obvious, and of this we were all sensible at the Beginning, and it had no small Influence on our first Resolutions; therefore, we agreed to make our Scheme as extensive likewise in this View, and as useful to all the Surgeons and Apprentices in *Edinburgh* as possible, by inviting the whole Corporation to join us, and to which they still have Access.

But to return to the further Progress of this Affair: We next laid down Rules for the right Oeconomy of the House, much the same with these observed in other Hospitals;

spitals; and opened our House to Patients on the first of *July* last: Since which Time we have been receiving in and taking Care of as many as our House could accommodate, where two of us have attended punctually every Day from Eleven to Twelve in the Forenoon, except *Sunday*, when we attended from four to five Afternoon, and the same attending Surgeons examine all Accounts every *Monday*.

IN this Place, we think it not improper to take Notice, that however much we were convinced of the Necessity of this Hospital when first it was projected, yet the short Experience we have had since the first of *July*, has set this Necessity in a much stronger Light than we could possibly have imagined before this Trial; for although we have been, by the Blessing of God, useful to, and cured many, yet if the Rest of the World were to see what Numbers we are obliged to dismiss, purely for want of larger Funds; were they likewise to see from what slight Strains, or inconsiderable Bruises, incurable Diseases arise, when not taken care of timeously, they would very much lament our having neglected this Piece of Charity so long.

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THE Gain of the most Part of Servants is but daily Subsistence, and few of them can afford to be many Days idle; hence it is, that so many of them are made lame and mutilated, not to mention those who die, purely because they could neither afford themselves proper Diet, Rest, nor Medicine at the Beginning of the Disease, when they might have been speedily and easily cured: So that in Truth, they may be more properly said to derive all this Misery from Want than Disease.

IF no Provision is made for the diseased Poor, and if they are left to linger out a miserable Life, without Expectation of any other Relief than Death, they are, in some Respect, in a worse Condition than the Beasts of Burthen, the Proprietor for his own Sake taking Care of them, while the poor Mechanick or Day-labourer is cast out naked and destitute, to struggle with Pain, Sicknes, Poverty and Death.

It is with Pleasure that we reflect upon the publick Spirit which prevails at present for encouraging Trade and Manufacture, and we hope Hospitals may be justly esteemed useful that Way; for as the Riches of a Trading Nation chiefly consists in the Number

ber of well employed Hands, so of consequence those who die through Want of timely Help, are so many working Hands cut off from the Community : And the lame and the mutilated are often not only miserable themselves, and a Burthen to their afflicted Friends, but, if we consider their Number throughout the Nation, they will be found no inconsiderable Tax upon the Country.

OUR next and great Care about this Hospital was, to settle it upon a lasting Foundation, that it might not possibly prove abortive before considerable Contributions could be raised : This we have done in such a Manner, as to make the Stability of our present Scheme pretty certain.

NOW our last and constant Concern is, how to make it more extensive; for the Number of the Diseased is great, and our present Fund small.

HITHERTO we have done our Part, and shall continue to do according to our Ability.

EVERY Tradesman employed in fitting up the House has contributed something; and now

now we apply to all who shall see this *Memorial*, hoping none will be so hard-hearted as to discourage, or so wicked as to oppose an Undertaking so charitable, so necessary for the Poor, and so beneficial to our Country.

Therefore, Generous Readers;

WE now call upon you all, by the Titles of *Men, Brethren* and *Christians*, to denote our common Tie of Humanity, and yet nearer Tie of Christian Charity. By what Arguments shall we persuade you to extend your Bounty to a poor Hospital in its Infancy?

IF you value the Prayers of those you may restore to Health and Happiness: If Pity and Compassion, the Interest of your Country, or the Approbation of our Saviour, can have Influence; come, like the good *Samaritan*, pour Wine and Oil into, and bind up the Wounds of your afflicted Brethren, by your Charity. Imagine yourselves given up to Pains and Want like theirs, or rather come and see the Miseries and untimely Deaths which you might so easily prevent, (for there is an Eloquence in visible Distress beyond what can be imagined;) and we hope there will be no Need

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of other Solicitations to dispose all of you to contribute according to the Circumstances with which G O D has blessed you.

N. B. *All the Money that is subscribed for is payable to Mr. William Wardrop Surgeon, our Treasurer.*

Subscribers for L. 5, or upwards, may be chosen Directors.

The Names of Subscribers for L. 1, or upwards, will be printed in due Time.

